

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 R

DRAFTED BY IO:SWLEWIS:OM

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E - WDROGERS

ARA/PAN - JPBECKER

ARA - HWSHLAUDEMAN

S/S-O:LRMACFARLANE

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY PANAMA PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 177814

EXDIS FOR AMBASSADOR JORDEN FROM ASST. SEC LEWIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PORG, XM, PN

SUBJ: PANAMA AT COLOMBO NACC

1. WE GREATLY APPRECIATE YOUR SUCCESSFUL EFFORTS WITH PANAMANIAN IN CONNECTION WITH RECENT DEBATE IN SECURITY COUNCIL PANAMA'S ABSTENTION WAS INDEED THE KEY ELEMENT WHICH PERMITTED OUR STRATEGY OF PLACING EMPHASIS ON HIJACKING TO HAVE A RELATIVE SUCCESS IN THE SC. SOLID EUROPEAN SUPPORT OF THE US/UK ANTI-HIJACKING RESOLUTION, COMBINED WITH FAILURE OF THE AFRICANS TO OBTAIN SUFFICIENT VOTES TO ADOPT THEIR PROPOSED CONDEMNATION OF ISRAEL LED THEM TO WITHDRAW THEIR RESOLUTION. PANAMA COULD WELL HAVE BEEN THE NINTH VOTE WHICH THEY WOULD HAVE NEEDED TO ADOPT THEIR RESOLUTION OR TO FORCE US TO LIKELY VETO.

2. OUR NEXT TASK WITH PANAMA RELATES TO COLOMBO NON-ALIGNED SUMMIT CONFERENCE. IF PANAMA CANAL ISSUE IS OVERLY DRAMATIZED AT COLOMBO, THIS WILL INCREASE LIKELIHOOD OF ITS DIS-

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CUSSION AT UNGA. I DO NOT NEED TO TELL YOU THAT AN UNGA

DISCUSSION OF THIS ISSUE IN OCTOBER WOULD NOT BE VERY TIMELY. SIMILARLY, VIGOROUS PANAMANIAN SUPPORT OF THE MORE RADICAL PROPOSALS WHICH WILL COME BEFORE THE SUMMIT CONFERENCE WOULD NOT BE HELPFUL HERE.

3. WE ARE CONSIDERING BEST MEANS OF URGING PANAMANIAN GOVERNMENT TO PLAY CANAL ISSUE AT COLOMBO IN SAME MANNER AS THEY DID AT SANTIAGO OAS MEETING, RATHER THAN SUCCUMB TO TEMPTATION TO LINE UP NON-ALIGNED ON A POSITION CRITICAL OF U.S. WE DO NOT DOUBT THAT PANAMA COULD ACHIEVE THE LATTER IF IT WISHED. AT SAME TIME, WE DOUBT IF NON-ALIGNED WOULD ESCALATE THIS ISSUE TO A HIGHER LEVEL OF RHETORIC THAN PANAMANIAN WISH.

4. ONE APPROACH WHICH HAS SOME APPEAL HERE IS TO FOLLOW UP YOUR EMBASSY'S RECENT APPROACHES BY HAVING UNDER SECRETARY ROGERS CONVEY OUR CONCERNS BY PHONE TO FOREIGN MINISTER BOYD. DEPENDING ON OUTCOME OF THIS CONVERSATION, WE WOULD THEN ASK YOU TO FOLLOW UP AND TO GIVE US YOUR JUDGMENT AS TO WHETHER WE SHOULD ENCOURAGE PARALLEL APPROACHES BY VENEZUELA, COLOMBIA, AND COSTA RICA.

5. I WOULD WELCOME YOUR REACTION TO THIS PROPOSED COURSE OF ACTION AND ANY OTHER ADVICE YOU MAY HAVE ON THIS PROBLEM. TO HAVE EFFECT, WE BELIEVE AN EFFORT WITH THE PANAMANIAN SHOULD BE MADE NEXT WEEK SO THAT IF ANY SHIFT IN PANAMANIAN SIGNALS TO KEY NON-ALIGNED COORDINATING COMMITTEE MEMBERS CAN BE MADE PRIOR TO THE AUGUST 6 CONVENING OF THE NACC AT COLOMBO. ROBINSON

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